



## Arizona Department of Education

Tom Horne, Superintendent of Public Instruction

Educational Services  
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# CTE FACTS

**CTE FACTS** is published monthly during the school year and highlights informative educational statistics related to Career and Technical Education (CTE). The focus this school year is on Arizona CTE Core Values. This month's Core Value is:

**Showcasing innovative and exemplary practices in quality Career and Technical Education programs that include the following elements:**

- Industry validated curricula
- Integration of academic skills
- Work-based learning opportunities
- Articulation with postsecondary
- Industry partnerships
- Leadership and personal development

## An Exemplary and Successful CTE Program

This issue of CTE FACTS focuses on the eighth and final CTE Core Value. In an effort to reveal exemplary practices and showcase different ways to deliver CTE programs to students, this issue will concentrate on Peoria Unified School District's (PUSD) Academy of Finance program. By revealing the make-up of this program, other Arizona school districts can get a glimpse of what components are necessary in the creation of an exemplary and successful CTE program.

### Industry validated curricula

The idea of the Academy of Finance was started in 1982 in New York by individuals in the business world who saw the need to teach real world finance concepts to secondary school students. From the original class of students, 95% are still employed in a finance-related field. Each year when surveying recent program graduates, the PUSD has found that the number of students continuing in a finance related field also matches the 95% mark. One element that makes this program so strong is the curriculum, which is designed at a national level by the National Academy Foundation (NAF). The curriculum is divided into 4 units, Economics and the World of Finance, Banking and Credit, Financial Planning, and Securities and Insurance which are cross referenced with the state CTE Financial Services Program competencies. The Academy of Finance curriculum consists of four half-credit Financial Services courses which are supplemented with two additional credits in accounting. This credit requirement is one of three essential components necessary for a student to receive NAF national certification.

### Integration of academic skills

CTE teachers are responsible for integrating math and English concepts into the curriculum. Their responsibility also extends into cross walking the state academic standards into the courses that make the Academy of Finance curriculum. In a related matter, the second essential component necessary for

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a student to obtain NAF certification is that they need to obtain three college credits in a course related to finance before high school graduation. These credits can include academic credits in math and/or English and must be taken at a postsecondary institution.

### **Work-based learning opportunities**

The third and final component necessary for a student to receive national certification is that they have to participate in 180 hours of internship during the summer between their junior and senior year of high school. To qualify for this 6 week internship, students have to interview in front of a panel consisting of at least two business partners and one recent student graduate of the program. While a representative of PUSD monitors the students in meeting a number of performance objectives during this paid internship, students are required to complete assignments related to obtaining and keeping a job.

### **Articulation with postsecondary**

Institutions such as ASU West, DeVry and Glendale Community College serve on the PUSD NAF advisory board. Further articulation exists with other postsecondary institutions where students earn their three college credits.

### **Industry Partnerships**

The PUSD has assembled an NAF district advisory board which meets four times per year and provides assistance and guidance to the Academy of Finance. The board is divided up into five committees (i.e. Internship, Promotions, Recruitment, Fundraising and Scholarship, and Industry Education). Each committee attempts to meet each month and works to continue to enhance the academy concept by addressing various topics. For instance, the Internship Committee seeks out new internship openings in the community. Currently, there are 24 businesses involved in some capacity.

### **Leadership and Personal Development**

During their senior year of high school, students who have successfully met all the NAF certification requirements can enroll in a capstone course where they can apply their skills in a real world setting. Students get involved in such activities as promoting and recruiting future students for the program, conducting subject related conferences and conducting service learning projects, among other things. In addition, students get involved in statewide career and technical student organizations (e.g. FBLA, DECA).

## **FAST FACTS...**

- The academy has been in operation for 7 years.
- Approximately 300 PUSD students are annually enrolled in the Academy of Finance courses offered throughout the district.
- In a normal year, approximately 35 students complete all the national NAF requirements.
- Students can meet the district's economics' graduation requirement by taking and passing all four Academy of Finance high school classes.
- Additional information on the Academy of Finance can be found at [www.naf.org](http://www.naf.org)

**CTE Vision: Ensure a dynamic workforce by fully developing every student's career and academic potential.**

**CTE Mission: Prepare Arizona students for workplace success and continuous learning**

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